

REMARKS

In the May 2, 2005 Office Action, claims 1-7, 10-12, 15-24, 26, 27, and 30-41 stand rejected in view of prior art, while claims 8, 9, 13, and 14 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter. No other objections or rejections are made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the May 2, 2005 Office Action, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections. However, claims 1-4, 24, 26-27, 30-32, and 34-35 have been amended only to correct typographical errors. Applicant also respectfully requests that the finality of the rejection be withdrawn. Applicant also wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. Thus, claims 1-24, 26, 27, 30-41 are pending, with claims 1, 3, 5, 10, 15-17, 23, 24, 26, 34, 35, and 41 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-7, 10-12, 15-24, 26, 27, and 30-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,616,613 to Goodman ("Goodman patent"), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,709,399 to Shen ("Shen patent"). In response, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

More specifically, Applicant believes that the Shen patent does not qualify as prior art, since the U.S. application that matured into the Shen patent has been filed after the invention date of the present invention. The present application claims priority to two Japanese patent applications, one of which (No. 2000-255338) has been filed on August 25, 2000. The translation of Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-255338 is attached hereto, with a Verification of Translation. As clearly seen in the translation, the invention of the present application is disclosed in Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-255338. In other words, the invention date of the present application is August 25, 2000 or earlier, which is before October 20, 2000, the U.S. filing date of the Shen patent. Thus, Applicant believes that the Shen patent does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) or any other provisions.

In view of the above comment, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections to claims 1-7, 10-12, 15-24, 26, 27, and 30-41. Furthermore, Applicant also respectfully requests that the finality of the rejection be withdrawn. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections.


Allowable Subject Matter

In paragraph 3 of the Office Action, claims 8, 9, 13, 14 are indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. Since claims 5 and 10, from which claims 8, 9, 13, and 14 depend, are believed to be allowable, Applicant also believes that claims 8, 9, 13, and 14 continue to be allowable.

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In view of the foregoing comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1-24, 26, 27, and 30-41 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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